

CIA 5-01.2

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A Turning Point in Communism

It's not pleasant to have communism rampant 90 miles from our shore and Khrushchev threatening if we interfere in Cuba he will immediately go to Castro's defense.

Whether Khrushchev's statement is just a threat, or a promise he will fulfill, is anybody's guess. Nevertheless it's interesting to look back and wonder how we got where we are regarding Communist Cuba.

Most persons will remember in retrospect the uprising of Castro against the Batista regime. At the time Herbert Mathews of The New York Times strongly advocated that our country should aid Castro to triumph over the so-called Batista tyranny. And I do not doubt but that the Batista regime was very bad and deserved to be replaced. But that is not the point we are considering now.

Jules Dubois, Latin-American correspondent for The Chicago Tribune, maintained that Castro and his brother Raoul were known Communists and that, while Batista needed to be ousted, our country should not stand idly by and see Cuba pass into Communist hands.

FROM ALL APPEARANCES the Eisenhower administration seemed to go along with the thinking of Mathews and The New York Times. It would be interesting, in the light of what has transpired since, to review the files of the Central Intelligence Agency during the period of the insurrection in Cuba. Whether our country could have stopped Castro in the early stages of the revolution and thereby changed the course of history, may always remain an unanswered question.

After Castro had been triumphant, George W. Healy Jr., editor of The New Orleans Times-Picayune, was serving as president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. While Healy was not sympathetic with Castro he thought it would be a good idea to have Castro appear before that organization at its annual convention in Washington and tell of his plans for Cuba. Castro accepted the invitation. He spoke before the convention or it might more properly be said he ranted for more than an hour and a half, all the time carefully avoiding or acknowledging that he was a Communist.

Meanwhile there were two schools of thought—the one headed by Mathews which openly contended Castro was not a Communist and all was well. Others at the convention chose to side with Jules Dubois in believing Castro was an out and out Communist.

Castro the following week went to New York and spoke to several meetings there but never quite admitted that he was a Communist. His avowal of communism came several months later after his return to Cuba.

YOU MIGHT ASK what has all this to do with the situation as it exists today? Just this—we have only recently narrowly missed seeing Brazil, the biggest country in South America, turn Communist.

The Spanish department editor of The Miami Herald translated the following editorial which we reprint in part from The Lima Peru La Prensa:

"General Humberto Castello Branco,

of Brazil, has a long period of trial ahead of him in finishing out Goulart's term of office. His first job is to dismantle all of the complex Communist apparatus that had been operating under the protection of the previous government in preparation for a Brazilian takeover. The greatest challenge he faces, however, is a snowballing economic crisis.

"Brazil is undoubtedly a country of almost unlimited natural resources. Thanks to this and to an enormous backlog of capital investment comparable only to the resources that contributed to the grandeur of the United States in the past century, Brazil has been No. 1 among the developing countries of Latin America for years. In fact Sao Paulo, the giant industrial city, was long considered one of the fastest growing cities in the world.

"In the midst of this goldmine, under a series of inept governments, the country began to slip downhill into inflation.

"And as if the prolonged and senseless government spending spree wasn't enough, demagogues like Leonel Brizola became dedicated to the 'nationalization' (confiscation would be a better word) of private enterprise—a cause that was finally taken up on a national scale by the Goulart regime. So Brazil marched on—not only to the total obstruction of a previously healthy flow of foreign investment capital, but also a hasty withdrawal of foreign exchange in direct proportion to the measures adopted to prevent such economic catastrophe.

"Just as it is relatively easy to plummet from the pinnacle of inflation, it is extremely difficult to recover. This is the tremendous challenge that faces the government of Castello Branco."

Miami with its 100,000 Cuban refugees quartered in south Florida is very sensitive to the situation in Cuba but what